

Testimony in support of SB432  
Prepared by Katie Kassmier  
Government Affairs Director

Mr. Chairman, members of the committee, for the record my name is Katie Kassmier and I am representing over 1,600 farming and ranching families, officially Montana Farmers Union.

Ironically, many farmers who hoped to testify for this bill are seeding their camelina crops and are unable to be here. It is on behalf of these hard-working farmers that I am here in support of SB432.

Since you have already heard—and will undoubtedly continue to hear—numerous testimonies in support of this bill, I will focus on farmer benefits.

Right now, there are farmers venturing into the oilseed market, particularly by test planting with camelina. **Many more are willing to take the risk.**

But that's just it. It is a risk, especially when, even despite the many known benefits to consumers and producers alike; it is somewhat of an unsecured venture. Once the oilseed crops are successfully grown, harvested, crushed, and the biodiesel has been produced, the **entire state and, in fact, the entire nation will benefit.**

**Why is it then, that we expect the farmers to shoulder all of the risk?**

Establishing requirements for biodiesel helps secure market demand for existing and new crops, thereby creating a natural incentive for farmers to produce biodiesel.

Indeed, it helps to support the farmers **willing to shoulder the risk to offer energy alternatives to reduce our dependence on foreign oil, provide more affordable fuel to consumers, and provide a new market for agricultural products.**

**NOW, I feel compelled to address a leading argument against this bill—the alleged ugly word, mandate.**

**I would like you to think of this mandate as more of a nudge in the right direction.**

According to the National Biodiesel Board, as of January 1 of this year, there were no biodiesel production facilities in the state nor are there any under construction. There are, however, **105 established plants and 85 plants under construction nationwide, including in neighboring states.**

Will Montana be the first place to conceive of biodiesel? NO!! Will our farmers be the first to ever grow an oilseed and use them to make biodiesel? NO!! But, that doesn't mean that you shouldn't do everything in your power to help farmers move into the oilseed market and capitalize on the emerging demand for biodiesel. It also doesn't mean that Montana can't take a leading role nationwide instead of watching it crop up in places all around us.

You will hear testimony in support of, and in opposition to, this bill, including statistics supporting each side's arguments. You will have to weigh those arguments carefully. However, what I hope you take from my testimony is this: Montana farmers are ready to meet our energy challenges head-on and use their historic innovation and determination to offer solutions that will work. What they need from you is support—a piece of legislation to carry some of the risk.

Please support SB432. I have submitted comments from producers for the committee's further consideration.

Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

March 26, 2007

Statement in favor of SB 432 by:

Montana Farm to Fuel Co-op, Dan Downs, Molt, President

Members of the co-op feel that passage of this bill would provide stability in the biodiesel market that would allow capitalization by local producers. A fledgling co-op such as this could be assured of a market, which is important given the ups and downs of the current oil market. It's definitely difficult for business people to succeed in the production and sale of bio-products without being assured of a market.

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If you wish to speak with any members of the co-op, please contact Dan Downs at one of the following numbers.

(406) 208-7233 cellular

(406) 860-3107 cellular

(406) 252-8012 business

March 26, 2007

Statement in favor of SB 432 by:

Montana BioFuels Resources, LLC, Billings

We believe the passage of this legislation will allow for the completion of a biodiesel refinery project that has been three years in the planning. This legislation will help provide a dependable market that will ensure a strong and continuous supply of biodiesel for the benefit of the state of Montana.

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**Montana Farmers Union  
Member Comments  
In Support of SB432  
House Transportation Committee**

**I, Leonard Stone, a farmer from Geraldine, MT offer my support for this bill. This is a very important step to insure that those of us who want to grow an oilseed crop in Montana will know that what we produce will be used in state. To know our oilseed production would not be subject to freight to the west coast would enhance profitability and benefit Montana in many ways such as jobs and increased income.**

**As a producer, I want to know that there will be a long-term in-state market for what I raise. I do not want to see this resource that can be produced in Montana benefit other states first. If we do not do this for ourselves, someone else will do it for us.**

**Thank you.**

**The mandatory use of biodiesel would be a boom to agriculture and oil seed production. Please support SB432.**

**Deanna Styren  
961 20th RD NW  
Choteau, Mt. 59422**

*I am strongly in favor of a bill that would require biodiesel to be used as a percentage of all diesel sold in Montana.*

*One reason I favor the bill is that I see it as a catalyst for the biodiesel industry. As a farmer, I am increasingly concerned at the limited markets available for my products. I recently attended a workshop hosted by the Conservation District where the oilseed variety of trials at MSU-Northern were presented, and there initial trials are very promising. With an expanded market for oilseeds and the potential for a viable new crop to rotate between spring and winter wheat cycles, I think there is a strong grower market to supply a biodiesel industry in Montana.*

*Another reason I favor the bill is from an environmental standpoint. As a society, I think we need to seriously pursue opportunities to curb our dependence on fossil fuels, and I believe that biodiesel may be a key component in that effort.*

*I realize that in the short term the bill will likely increase the price I pay for diesel as suppliers seek a new product with a limited support structure, and I am willing to pay that increased price. I feel the potential benefits to a budding industry and future resource independence by the US is worth the premium I may pay at the pump for the next few years.*

*I urge the House Transportation Committee to consider this bill.*

*Thank You for Your Time*

*Wade Bitz  
Farmer  
27163 Road 120 South  
Box Elder, MT 59521  
406.352.478*

Dear Members of Montana House of Representatives Transportation Committee:

I would like you to support SB432(biodiesel). I feel that it would boost the ag. economy in Montana. By growing some of our own fuel in state it would make us less dependent on others.

Thank you for your time.  
Larry Hendrickson  
Commissioner Liberty County

Yes, FOR Biodiesel!!

Biodiesel required for diesel in the state of Montana would be great for everyone in Montana.  
THANKS FOR YOUR SUPPORT!!

Doug Henke  
4455 South Tiber Road  
Chester, Montana

A point to the committee,

When you travel back east there is a toll to pay on most highways. It should be a toll to pay in MT that you will have Biodiesel in your truck, car, or train to pass through MT. Yes we are in favor of having more Biodiesel in Montana and The Sooner The Better. With the rail system in this state we should be able to move the product both directions.

Dayl B. Sather